

March 19<sup>th</sup>

## LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

*“When the men of the place asked him about his wife, he said, ‘She is my sister,’ for he feared to say, ‘My wife,’ thinking, ‘lest the men of the place should kill me because of Rebekah,’ because she was attractive in appearance. When he had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out of a window and saw Isaac laughing with Rebekah his wife. So Abimelech called Isaac and said, ‘Behold, she is your wife. How then could you say, ‘She is my sister?’” Isaac said to him, ‘Because I thought, ‘Lest I die because of her.’”* **GENESIS 26:7-9**

“**L**ike father, like son.” “Every father should remember one day his son will follow his example, not his advice.” “The imprint of a dad will forever remain on his son’s soul.” When you think of your father, what words come to you mind? What character did he pass on to you, both good and bad? Our fathers have a huge impact on us, whether we recognize this truth or not. And it was no different with Abraham and Isaac. We’ve read of the huge triumphs of Abraham, and his son witnessed the great testing of faith on the mountain. We don’t know much about Isaac, but what we do know is that he struggled with the same trust that his father did in his young age. We’ve already read about his journey to Egypt, but God stopped him short in Gerar. Here is another example where Isaac repeats the sin of the father...lying about his wife to escape death. What is God teaching us here?

If you switched the stories of Abraham’s lies and Isaac’s lies and removed their names from the stories, the odds are pretty high that we wouldn’t be able to tell which one was which. The details are very similar. The main difference between Abraham’s lies and Isaac is that Abram has a discussion with Sarai, but Isaac doesn’t. However, they both put their wives in harm’s way. There’s no guarantee that Rebekah won’t be taken as a wife by the Philistines. Isaac doesn’t trust that God will protect him. He devises his own plan to save his skin. Even after God has just given his six grand “I will” promises.

Isaac’s lie is exposed, but it takes awhile. While Isaac and Rebekah are staying in Gerar, they engage in actions that are designed only for husband and wife. Notice how the text describes how long they had been in Gerar, “when he had been there a long time...” And now the secret comes out. It’s especially shameful when unbelievers call out the sins of those who are God’s people! And do you see that Abimelech acts as protector of Rebekah, which Isaac should have been in the first place? Moses puts these details in the story to get our attention focused on the failure of Isaac to trust God and protect his family from harm.

Men, what does God want to say to us through this peculiar story of Isaac? We can see that he’s not much different than us. We also can be very fickle and wayward with our conduct in our world. One day we may have great triumph, the next day we may utterly fall. One constant remains...Our God gives His promise that He is with us and He acts as our protector. Isaac just received the six “I wills” from God and followed God in obedience...and then lies to protect himself instead of trusting God. He knew God’s promise, but it hadn’t been secured in his heart. His brain knew the promise, but he struggled to believe it when life became tough. Is it any different with you? How often do we sing songs of praise on Sunday, only to sin against God on Monday? This is a call for us to beg God to give us iron spines that won’t give way when we smell trouble. We must beg God to give us His strength. We must preach the gospel to ourselves every day, because it takes our minds off ourselves and puts the heart back on God’s power and glory. Men, your hope is that God promises to give you everything that you need to follow Him.

***Spend some time thinking about what God says about your identity that’s found in Christ. Ask Him to give you courage to live like you believe it today.***

**For Further Reading: Ephesians 6:10-20**